

Connecticut is fortunate to have a non-partisan agency leading our state of behalf of the wellbeing of all children since 1985. The Commission on Children (COC) provides leadership in key children's policies, informing and advising our legislators in areas that impact us as families.

Yet, Governor Rell's deficit mitigation plan calls for the elimination of this important agency.

For each dollar invested in it, the Commission on Children locates or brings in more than 20 times as many dollars from federal funds, foundations, and private sources. These funds do not come to the Commission, but support initiatives at the state and local levels that benefit children and families.

Consider this. The Commission on Children:

locates and maximizes federal dollars to help both taxpayers and children.

distributes more than 1 million information items each year to CT residents on education, health and safety.

designed the Parent Leadership Training Institute - now in 14 cities - whose graduates provided more than \$1.1 million worth of volunteer hours;

leading on the Speaker's Task Force on Children and the Recession - the only such entity *in the nation* focused on the impact on children in the economic downturn.

works across all three branches of government, and supports the work in cities and towns.

We cannot afford to lose the revenue the Commission generates for our communities for the leadership it provides for children and families during these tough economic times:

- an estimated \$1 million in matching funds for parent leadership training in 23 towns and cities.
- \$9.25 million of federal funds for family nutrition and education and training for parents

Eliminating the Connecticut Commission on Children would lead to the loss of federal funds and will hurt Connecticut's children.

In Danbury alone, nearly 300 parents use leadership skills learned through the Commission's Parent Leadership Training Institute.

As a result, families use free English Language Learning opportunities WITH their children, children without books at home now have a home library, generations share stories of growing up in The Hat City, children with special needs now have supports for recreation and social interaction, health systems are improved. Families in Danbury are STRONG because parents LEAD on their behalf.

The Commission on Children and the Parent Trust Fund are making a difference throughout the state and in Danbury. The resources are vital investments in our children and families, especially in these tough economic times.

Please don't forget Connecticut's children and families during the state's budget crisis!

I urge you to stand up for children and families by maintaining funding for the Commission on Children.